To support his mission, the Prophet Muhammad, like other prophets, was given miracles. The greatest miracle he received is the Quran. The miracles of earlier prophets are not something we can experience ourselves. None of us have seen Moses part the sea or Jesus heal the blind. However, the Quran is a "permanent" miracle for all of posterity. The Quran is a miracle in its language and its content. This leaflet focuses on the linguistic miracle of the Quran.

The ancient Arabs regarded poetry as their highest form of culture. The entire Arab society was centered around poetry. They entertained themselves with poetry in their free time and participated in various poetry competitions. Because of how much they valued their language, it had developed and become very deep and complex. Their understanding of poetry had become incomparable to that of other peoples. When a society's primary form of entertainment and culture becomes one thing, they master it in a way that others may find hard to comprehend. The American historian Will Durant describes the Arabs' relationship with poetry before the Prophet Muhammad:

> The Arabs took pride in the antiquity and fullness of their language, loved to roll its mellifluous syllables in oratorical flourishes on tongue or pen, and listened with tense ecstasy to the poets who, in villages and cities, in desert camps or at the fairs, recalled to them, in running meters and endless rhymes, the loves and wars of their heroes, tribes, or kings. The poet was to the Arabs their historian, genealogist, satirist, moralist, newspaper, oracle, call to battle; and when a poet won a prize at one of the many poetry contests, his whole tribe felt honored, and rejoiced[1]

Philip K. Hitti, an orientalist and professor at Harvard, explains how remarkable it is that the Arabs, despite their relatively primitive society, had such an advanced language:

> Few people in history seem to have been as susceptible to the influence of the word, spoken or written, as the "sons of Arabic," the Arabs' favorite designation of themselves. It was only in the field of verbal expression that pre-Islamic Arabians distinguished themselves. The extent to which they developed their language is surprising; it was out of proportion to the development of their political, social, and economic institutions. How illiterate camel breeders living in scattered tribes, with no political cohesion to unite them, could develop a refined, richly worded means of expression remains a mystery.[2]

The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an explains:

> Old Arabic poetry is a highly complex phenomenon. The vocabulary, grammatical idiosyncrasies and strict norms were passed down from generation to generation, and only the most gifted students fully mastered the language. A person had to study for years, sometimes even decades under a master poet before laying claim to the title of poet. Muhammad grew up in a world which almost religiously revered poetic expression.[3]

1W. Durant (1950) *The Story of Civilization* (Vol.4) Simon And Schuster p.158-159

2 Philip K. Hitti i Saudi Aramco world 1970 Nov/Dec print edition pp.2-3. Finns på: https://archive.aramcoworld.com/issue/197006/the.first.book.htm

3Navid Kermani (2006) Poetry and Language. In: Andrew Rippin (ed.). *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 108.

The Quran stands at a completely superior level compared to all other poetry. For those who master classical Arabic, it is evident that the Quran was not written by a human. For these individuals, the Quran is a miracle, like other miracles.

Allah challenged the disbelieving Arabs to produce something similar, but none of them attempted. They were completely obsessed with stopping Islam and were prepared to do anything to end the Prophet Muhammad's message. Instead of accepting the challenge, they turned to violence, propaganda, and slander because they knew the challenge was impossible. They dismissed its eloquence as magic. The challenge becomes even more remarkable considering that the Prophet Muhammad was not an educated linguist; he could neither read nor write and was absolutely not a poet.

Quran 11:13-14:
Or do they say, “He (The Prophet) has fabricated this ˹Quran˺!”? Say, ˹O Prophet,˺ “Produce ten fabricated sûrahs like it and seek help from whoever you can—other than Allah—if what you say is true!” But if your helpers fail you, then know that it has been revealed with the knowledge of Allah, and that there is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him! Will you ˹not˺ then submit ˹to Allah˺?

2:23-24
And if you are in doubt about what We have revealed to Our servant (Muhammed), then produce a sûrah like it and call your helpers other than Allah, if what you say is true.
But if you are unable to do so—and you will never be able to do so—then fear the Fire fuelled with people and stones, which is prepared for the disbelievers.

10:38
Or do they claim, “He made it up!”? Tell them ˹O Prophet˺, “Produce one sûrah like it then, and seek help from whoever you can—other than Allah—if what you say is true!”

46:7
Whenever Our clear revelations are recited to them, the disbelievers say of the truth when it has come to them, “This is pure magic.”

The Italian orientalist Laura Vaglieri explains:

> Although the opponents of Islam were invited by Muhammad to compose a book similar to his own, or, at least, a chapter ("And if you are in doubt as to what We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it;"), and although those who had the ability to express themselves with great eloquence were plentiful among the Arabs, yet nobody was able to produce anything which could stand comparison with the Quran; they fought the Prophet with arms but failed to match the excellence of the Quran. ...This is a book which cannot be imitated. Each of its expressions is a comprehensive one, and yet it is of proper size, neither too long nor too short. Its style is

> original. There is no model for this style in Arab literature of the times, preceding it. The effect which it produces on the human soul is obtained without any adventitious aid through its own inherent excellences. The verses are equally eloquent all through the text… qualities which generally do not go together, are found together here, where each rhetoric figure finds a perfect application. How could this marvellous book be the work of Muhammad[4]

Professor of Oriental Studies Martin Zammit writes:

> Notwithstanding the literary excellence of some of the long pre-Islamic poems, or qasa'id the Qur'an is definitely on a level of its own as the most eminent written manifestation of the Arabic language.[5]

Oliver Leaman, an American professor specializing in Islamic and Jewish studies, writes:

> The verses of the Qur'an represent its uniqueness and beauty, not to mention its novelty and originality. That is why it has succeeded in convincing so many people of its truth. It imitates nothing and no one, nor can it be imitated. Its style does not pall, even after long periods of study, and the text does not lose its freshness over time.[6]

Historian and linguist Henry Stubbe writes that there is no sensible person who denies the elegance of the Quran:

> The truth is, I do not find any understanding Author who controverts the Elegancy of the Alcoran[7]

British Arabist Alfred Guillaume explains:

> The Quran is one of the world's classics which cannot be translated without grave loss. It has a rhythm of peculiar beauty and a cadence that charms the ear. Many Christian Arabs speak of its style with warm admiration, and most Arabists acknowledge its excellence… It is this quality it possesses of silencing criticism by the sweet music of its language that has given birth to the dogma of its inimitability; indeed it may be affirmed that within the literature of the Arabs, wide and fecund as it is both in poetry and in elevated prose, there is nothing to compare with it.[8]

The British orientalist A. J. Arberry describes the experience of translating the Quran:

> In making the present attempt to improve on the performance of my predecessors, and to produce something which might be accepted as echoing however faintly the sublime rhetoric of the Arabic Koran, I have been at pains to study the intricate and richly varied

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4*Laura Veccia Vaglieri(2004)An Interpretation of Islam. GoodWord Books. pp.42-43. Original: (translation: Dr. Aldo Caselli) Apologia dell' Islamismo (1925) A. F. Formiggini*

5 M. R. Zammit (2002) *A Comparative Lexical Study of Qur'anic* Arabic. Leiden: Brill. p. 37.

6O. Leaman (2006) *The Qur'an: An Encyclopedia*. Routledge. p. 404

7 Henry Stubbe(1911)An Account Of The Rise And Progress Of Mahometanism. Luzac & Co. p.158

8Alfred Guillaume(1956) *Islam.* Penguin Books. pp.73-74

> rhythms which—apart from the message itself—constitute the Koran's undeniable claim to rank amongst the greatest literary masterpieces of mankind.[9]

The Iraqi Jew, Nessim Joseph Dawood, writes in his English translation of the Quran:

> THE KORAN is the earliest and by far the finest work of Classical Arabic prose. … It is acknowledged that the Koran is not only one of the most influential books of prophetic literature but also a literary masterpiece in its own right. In adhering to a rigidly literal rendering of Arabic idioms, previous translations have, in my opinion, practically failed to convey both the meaning and the rhetorical grandeur of the original.[10]

Angelika Neuwirth, a German professor of Quranic studies, was asked in an interview if anyone had succeeded in meeting the Quran's challenge. She replied: "No one has succeeded, this is right."[11]

A person who quickly reads the Quran may find that the text jumps significantly from topic to topic without any clear connection. One might feel that the text is disorganized, but is that really the case? Michel Cuypers, a Belgian linguist, studied the order of the Quran's verses. He conducted in-depth analyses in his book *The Composition of the Qur'an*. He summarizes the book:

> It is true, however, that through assiduous reading and textual analysis the exceptionally complex and erudite character of this text has become more and more evident to us. We can no longer endorse what Voltaire wrote in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*: 'The Qur'an is a rhapsody without connections, without order, without art.' We hope to have demonstrated that, in spite of the impression that a superficial reading might leave, the Qur'an is a text whose parts *are linked* according to clearly definable principles of *order* and a consummate work of *art* even though it is outside of our Western and modern mental habits.[12]

The Anglican priest and author Neal Robinson conducted a similar analysis of the Quran's order and reached similar conclusions. He could not conclude his book *Discovering the Qur'an* without acknowledging: "The case for considering the Qur'an as revelation is a very strong one".[13] Professor Raymond Farrin, an American linguist and expert in classical Arabic poetry (who has embraced Islam), studied the order of the Quran's Surahs and verses. He wrote the book *Structure and Qur'anic Interpretation: A Study of Symmetry and Coherence in Islam's Holy Text*. He summarizes the book:

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9 A. J. Arberry (1998) *The Koran: Translated with an Introduction by Arthur J. Arberry.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. x.

10 N.J Dawood(2006) The Koran. Penguin Books. Introduction

11 https://archive.org/details/exclusive-interview-with-non-muslim-german-scholar-of-the-quran-angelika-neuwrith-1
also:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AvFfjZgDX8ABKtVi52YJtQqw1Zkca9Od/

12 Michel Cuypers(2015) The Composition of the Qur'an :Rhetorical Analysis. Översatt av Jerry Ryan. Bloomsbury. pp. 181-182

13 Neal Robinson(2003)Discovering the Quran. SCM Press. p.286

But as regards the phenomenon of the text, our immediate concern, we are presented with the case of someone who, through forty years of life, had shown no special inclination to literature (he was a merchant). Suddenly he began coming forth, in the context of an extraordinarily rich literary tradition, with what has always been regarded as completely beyond compare, inimitable.[14]

14Raymond Farrin(2014) *Structure and Qur'anic interpretation : a study of symmetry and coherence in Islam's holy text*. White Cloud Press. Conclusion